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243 857 872 labor to the family farm work. It is also the time for children of families of other occupation to earn their small lampai from piece-working.

872 871 We have devoted a few pages to this topic of training the young for farm work because we think it is relevant to the study of the village economy. While the standard of teaching is generally poor in most primary schools in Thailand and consequently farm children receive rather poor academic education, it has been observed that their training in the farm work given by the family is exceedingly thorough. With the exception of a few bright children who are able to finish Pratom IV in four years and thus are able to leave the primary school at the age of 12, most farm children are kept in the school until the age of 14 because they usually fail in the examination at the end of each academic year and have to repeat once, twice, and even thrice. A good many are obliged to leave school at the compulsory age of 14 without passing Pratom IV. Urban children, on the other hand, usually pass Pratom IV at the age of 10 and are able to proceed on their secondary education at the standard age of 11 when they start their Matyom I. This is because they went to school at an early age and had better teachers at the Pratom level. Thus, farm children usually lag behind urban children in academic achievement. The situation is aggravated by the city secondary schools' practice of using students' achievement by age as the basis for admission decision. As a result, farm children do not

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369 have an opportunity for secondary education although some
• 87 of them have adequate financial support. This has a tre-
[464] mendous effect on job opportunity for farm people, for most firms and Government departments set Matyom VIII as minimum standard for even the lowest clerical job.

243 While farm children have a poor academic education,
369 they are compensated by a high degree of farm training which
464 includes not only the technique of rice growing but also the
868 use of basic equipment for manual labor and simple construction work. It has been observed that farmers are better qualified to do manual work than urban people. This aptitude, however, does not to any considerable extent minimize the farmer's disadvantage in making a living other than by farming. In the first place, compensation for manual work is generally lower than the pay for clerical jobs. Second, there are in the city more job opportunities for clerical work and other white-collar types than there are for manual work. Third, the white-collar jobs tend to be more or less permanent while the manual jobs tend to be somewhat seasonal, and the manual worker seldom has a "position" in the firm as does the white-collar worker.

To the extent that these three conditions remain true, it may be assumed that the type of academic education and practical training being given to Bangchan children will serve only to confine them to farming life rather than to give them opportunity for alternative occupations.